A New Year's Benediction

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"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as you have, for He has said, I willnever leave you, nor forsake you." Hebrews 13:5.

OBSERVE the way in which the Apostles were accustomed to incite Believers in Christ to the performance of their duties. They did not tell them, "You must do this or that, or you will be punished. You must do this and then you shall obtain a reward for it." They never cracked the whip of the Law in the ears of the child of God. They knew the difference between the man who was actuated by sordid motives and the fear of punishment—and the newborn man who is moved by more sublime motives, namely, motives that touch his heart, that move his regenerated nature and that compel him, out of affection, to do the will of Him that sent him. Hence the address, here, is not, "Be content, or else God will take away what you have," but, "Be content and have nothing to do with covetousness, for He has said, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you."

The promise is made the argument for the precept! Obedience is enforced by a Covenant blessing. He has said, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." What then? Shall I be discontented and covetous? No! But for the very reason that He has made, by His promise, my very safety absolute and unconditional, assuring me, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you"—for that reason I will keep covetousness and every other evil thing out of my conversation and will seek to walk contentedly and happy in the Presence of my God! See, Brothers and Sisters, this Gospel motive. It is a Free Grace argument. It is not a weapon taken from the arsenal of Mount Sinai, but taken from the region of the Cross and from the council chamber of the Covenant of Love!

Another thing in the text to which I would call your notice is this—that an Inspired Apostle who might very well have used his own original words, nevertheless, in this case, as indeed in many others, quotes the Old Testament. "He has said, I will never leave you, nor forsake you." Behold, then, the value of Holy Scripture! If an Inspired man quotes the text as of Divine authority, much more should we so regard it, who are without such inspiration. We should be much in searching the Scriptures and when we want to clench an argument, or answer an opponent, it would always be well for us to take our weapon from the grand old Book and come down with, "He has said." Oh, there is nothing like this for force and power! We may think a thing, but what of that? Our opinions are but of little worth.

General authority and universal opinion may sustain it, but what of that? The world has been more frequently wrong than right and public opinion is a fickle thing. But '"He has said," that is to say, God has said—Immutable Truth and eternal fidelity have said God, who made Heaven and earth, and who changes not, though nations melt like the hoar frost of the morning—God who always lives when hills, mountains and this round world and everything upon it shall have passed away—"He has said!" Oh, the power there is in this, "He has said, I will never leave you, nor forsake you"! So, then, let us be much in searching the Scriptures, much in feeding upon them, much in diving into their innermost depths—and then afterwards much in the habit of quoting them, using them as arguments for the defense of the Truths of God, as weapons against error and as reasons to call us to the path of duty and to pursue it!

But now to come to the promise, itself, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." I shall call your attention, first of all, to—

I. THE REMARKABLE CHARACTER OF THIS PROMISE.

Is it not an amazing fact that while others leave us and forsake us, that God never does? It is to each one of His own redeemed people that He says, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." How often do men play false and forsake those whom they call their friends when those friends fall into poverty Ah, the tragedies of some of these cruel forsakings! May you never know them! These so-called friends knew their friends when that suit of black was new, but how sadly their eyesight fails them, now it is turned to a rusty brown! They knew them extremely well when once a week they sat with their legs under their table and shared their generous hospitality—but they know them not, now that they knock at their door and crave help in a time of need!

Matters have changed altogether and friends that once were cherished are now forgotten. In fact, the man almost pities himself to think that he should have been so unfortunate to have a friend who has come down so and he has no pity for his friend because he is so much occupied in pitying himself! In hundreds, thousands and tens of thousands of cases, as soon as the gold has gone, the pretended love has gone! And when the dwelling has been changed from the mansion to the cottage, the friendship, which once promised to last forever, has suddenly disappeared!

But, Brothers and Sisters, God will never leave us on account of poverty! However low we may be brought, there it always stands—"I will never leave you, nor forsake you." Scant may be your board. You may have hard work to provide things honest in the sight of all men. You may sometimes have to look and look again—and wonder by what straits you will be enabled to escape out of your present difficulty. But when all friends have turned their backs and when acquaintances have fallen from you like leaves in autumn, He has said, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." Then beneath His bounty you shall find a shelter!

And when these other hands are shut, His hands shall still be outstretched in loving kindness and tender mercy to help and deliver the soul of the needy!

Sometimes, and very often, too, men lose all their friends if they fall into any temporary disgrace. They may really have done no wrong—they may even have done right— but public opinion may condemn the course they took, or slander may be propagated which casts them into the shade! And then men suddenly grow forgetful. They do not know the man—how should they? He is not the same man—to them at any rate—and as the world gives him the cold shoulder, his friends serve him the same. The old proverb, "The devil take the hindmost," seems to be generally the custom with our friends when we get into seeming disgrace! They are all off, seeing who can run away first, for they fear that they shall be left to share in our dishonor. But it is never so with our God. "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." You may be put into the dungeon, like Paul and Silas, but God will make you sing there, even at midnight! You may be set in the stocks, but even there God will cause you to greatly rejoice! You may be cast into the fiery furnace, but He will tread the flames with you! You may be so dishonored that men shall treat you as they did God's only Son—and lift you up upon the cross of shame and put you to death—but you shall never ask, "Why have You forsaken me?" Your Lord said it when He bore your guilt, but you shall never need to say it, for your guilt is put away forever and Jehovah will stand by you in all your dishonor! And let me say here that there is never a child in the family that is dearer to the great Father than the child that is suffering shame and contempt from others! He loves them dearest when they suffer reproach for His sake! These are nearer to His heart than any other and He bids them rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great shall be their reward in Heaven if thus they bear and endure for His name! "I will never leave you, My persecuted one! I will pour such joy into your heart that you shall forget all the dishonor. I will send an angel to minister to you. Yes, I will, Myself, be with you and you shall rejoice in My salvation while your heart is glad and calm in the midst of the tumult and the strife around."

Blessed be God, all the shame and spitting that men can put upon us can never put our God away, for, "He has said, I will never leave you, nor forsake you." Alas, sad is it for human nature that we must say it—how many have been forsaken when they have been no longer able to minister to the pleasure and comfort of those who admired them while they profited by them! Some are thus thrown aside just as men throw away household stuff that is worn out and is of no further use. Depend upon it, men will not forsake us while they can get anything out of us! But when there is no longer anything to profit by, when the poor woman becomes so decrepit that she can scarcely move from her bed to her chair, when the man becomes so laid aside by accident or is so weak that he cannot take his place in the great march of life—then he is like the soldiers in Napoleon's march—he drops out of the line to die and thousands either march over him, or if they are a little more merciful, march by and around him! But few are those who will stop to care for such and attend to them. How often

are the incurable forsaken and left! But He has said, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." If we should getso old that we cannot serve the Church of God, even by a single word. If we should become so sick that we are only a burden to those of our house who have to nurse us. If we should grow so feeble that we could not lift our hand to our lip, yet the eternal love of Jehovah would not have diminished, no, not so much as by a single jot towards the souls whom He had loved from before the foundation of the world! However low your condition, you shall find God's love is always underneath for your uplifting! However weak you are, His strength shall be revealed in the everlasting arms that will not permit you to sink into disaster and your soul into Hell. This, then, is a very precious text! Others may forsake us for different reasons—too many to be mentioned now—but He has said, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." Well, then, let the rest go! If the Lord Jehovah stands at our right hand, we can well afford to see the backs of all our friends, for we shall find Friends enough in the Triune God whom we delight to serve!

Again, this is a very remarkable promise if we think of our own conduct towards God. "He has said, I will never leave you, nor forsake you." And have not we often said the same to Him? We were like Peter—we felt we did love our Savior—we were sure we did and we did not, could not believe that we could ever be so false or so faithless as to forsake Him. We almost longed for some temptation to prove how true we would be! We felt very vexed with other professors, that they should prove so untrue! We felt in our heart that we could not do like that and that we would stand firm under any imaginable pressure! But what became of us, my Brothers and Sisters? Charge your memories a moment. Did the rooster that accused Peter never accuse you? Did you never deny your Lord and Master and, at last, hearing the warning voice, go out and weep bitterly because you had forgotten Him—He whom you had declared so solemnly you would never forsake? Oh, yes, I fear we, many and many a time, have said, "I will never leave You, nor forsake You," and yet under some sarcasm, some ridicule, or some pressing trial, we have been like the children of Ephraim and, though armed and carrying bows, we have turned our back in the day of battle! If your voice has never denied Christ, has your heart ever done so? If your tongue has remained silent, has not your soul sometimes gone back to the old flesh-pots of Egypt and said, "I would gladly find comfort once again where I did find it with my old companions and in the old ways"? Ah, well, as you think of this—how unkindly and ungenerously you have treated your Lord—let this text stand out in bold relief, "He has said, I will never leave you, nor forsake you." Although you have often forgotten Him, yet, His loving kindness changes not! Though you have been fickle, He has been firm! Though you have sometimes believed Him not, yet He has remained faithful—glory be to His name!

Again, this promise is a very remarkable one if we notice how it overrides all the suggestions that might arise from a mere view of strict and severe justice. It might be said, "Surely a child of God might justly be forsaken. He might so sin against God that it would only be

just to leave him utterly to himself." Now, I am free to grant that a child of God might do so, no, that allthe children of God do do so and that God would be just if He acted upon the stern principle of His Law to forsake His children as soon as ever they were converted, for it is not long after their conversion that they sin! And that sin is a special kind of treason against God. He would be just even if He cast them away! But what I desire to enforce is this—that the promise is remarkable because it makes no kind of provision for this in any sort of degree and under no imaginable circumstances! It does not say, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you if—as certain brethren are prone to put it—"if—you do not forsake Me." Nor does it say, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you if you do such-and-such and such-and-such." It is an absolute promise without any perhapses, ifs, buts, conditions, or promises! "I will never leave you, nor forsake you."

He that believes in Jesus shall never be so left of God as to fall finally from Grace! He shall never be so deserted as to give up his God, for his God will never give him up so far as to let him give up his confidence, or his hope, or his love, or his trust! The Lord, even our God, holds us with His strong right hand and we shall not be moved! And even if we sin—sweet thought!—"If any man sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous." Over the heads of all our sins and iniquities, this promise sounds like a sweet silver bell, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you."

Now, there are some that would make licentiousness out of this and go into sin, but in doing so they prove themselves not to be the children of God! They show at once that they know nothing of the matter, for the genuine child of God, when he has a promise which is unconditional, finds holiness in it. Being moved by gratitude, he needs no buts, ifs, conditions, racks and scourges in order to do right. He is ruled by love, not by fear! He is governed by a holy gratitude which becomes a stronger bond to sacred obedience than any other bond that could be invented! Hence to the child of

God, the knowledge that God will not leave nor forsake him, never suggests the thought of plunging into sin! He were an awful monster, indeed, if he did any such thing, but he hates it and he says—

"Loved of my God, for Him again
With love intense I burn—
Chosen of Him ere time began
I choose Him in return."

Observe, then, how remarkable is the promise—so contrary to the manner of men, so contrary to our own conduct and so absolute and unconditional, that it is, indeed, marvelous that such a word should be on record. "I will never leave you, nor forsake you."

I cannot leave this part of the subject without remarking that such a promise as this seems to me that it makes a clean sweep of every suggestion to the child of God to be de-

pressed in mind. You tell me you do not feel, just now, as you did some time ago—you are not anything like so earnest and lively in the Divine ways.

When a Believer is in this state, it is sometimes suggested to him that doubtless he is not a Christian at all—and that he must go back altogether to Egypt in order to get Gospel liberty. This is foolishness! But this promise comes in and says to him, "God has not left you, nor forsaken you." Whatever may be your present state of thought and feeling, however low you may have fallen, the Eternal God is still faithful! He has not forgotten you! Go to Him now—ask for reviving and refreshing, for He will surely give them to you. Conscience will, perhaps, say to some child of God tonight— indeed, I hope it will—"There has been much today in business that has not been what it should have been, and as you look back upon the day, you will see much to mourn over." And then, perhaps, conscience will add, "Therefore God will leave you." Now, if you come to believe that, you will live worse tomorrow than today! And the next day still worse! But if you can answer, "No, He has said, 'I will never leave you, nor forsake you,'" and can go with child-like confidence to your God and confess the sins of the day and begin again washing once more in the precious Fountain filled with blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins, tomorrow there will be a better day! The joy of the Lord will be your strength against the sin and your confidence in your Father's Immutable Affection will inspire you with zeal to trample down your temptations! Perhaps the devil may be injecting into your soul tonight all sorts of strange things—that God has quite forsaken you and that He will be gracious no more to you and other lies of that kind. But He has said, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you," and if you can get hold of this, it will be a sufficient refutation of all the suggestions of your own fear and of the infernal power! No, Satan! I will cast myself upon the precious blood of Jesus! And if God should take all my property away, yet He has not left me, nor forsaken me! I am sure of that! And if my spirit sinks so low that I dare not look up, yet still He has said He has not left me, and He never will! If my sins should roll over me like a big billow and my conscience should cry out against me—and I should feel no rest and no peace—yet still I will hold on to Jesus, sink or swim, for He has said, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." And let God be true and every man and every devil— and even my own conscience—prove a liar sooner than God's Word should for a moment be placed in doubt!

We now pass on to ponder upon—

II. THE REMARKABLE COMFORT CONTAINED IN THIS PROMISE.

See how it abounds! I note, first, its constancy. "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." That is, not for a day, not for an hour, not for a minute! There are no breaks in the Divine Love. God does not depart from His people to return to them, by-and-by, but He assures, "I will never, no never, leave you." Perhaps that dear child of yours that is sick is soon to die. Well, God will not leave you in the moment when she is taken from you. Possibly that dear one who is now your comfort and delight, your husband, may get sick and it will be a terrible

stroke for you to be visited with, but, "I will never leave you, not even for an instant! Then in that trying time you shall prove the power and solace of My Presence."

Perhaps, businessman, that great commercial project, that great transaction of yours may prove to be a losing one— that bill may be dishonored, you may come to bankruptcy without any fault on your part but—"I will never leave you nor forsake you." Yes, you may have to go to Australia and you may greatly dread the leaving your native land, but even then, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." It may be you may be so misrepresented as to become suspected by those whom you love best and you may be even put out of the Church of God without any fault but entirely through error. Well, but then, even then, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you " not even for a minute! Oh, Brothers and Sisters, what would be the consequences if the Lord left us for one quarter of an hour? I solemnly believe that if God were to leave

His people even on their knees for twenty minutes, they would be brought to the deepest Hell! But He will not leave them, even there! And if it were dangerous to leave them on their knees alone, how much more so in the market or in business amidst enemies—seeking to catch them in their speech and deed! But He will never for a moment leave His people nor forsake them! He will be at all times, at all hours, at all seasons, in all days of emergency at their right hand and they shall not be moved!

I notice in the promise, next to constancy, endurance. As there shall be no breaks in God's love for His own, so there shall be no end to it. "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." Yes it may not be desirable to live to extreme old age when infirmities may abound and all strength may decay, but if you should reach it, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." It certainly is a painful thing—that last stroke to pass to the Throne of God—but, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." There shall never be a time when the Lord will cast away one of His people! He shall never grow weary of them. He has espoused them unto Himself—married them—taken them into eternal union with Himself! And let the ages revolve as they may and time change as it will, God will never leave or forsake His people! Comfort yourselves, therefore, with the confidence of the endurance as well as the constancy of this love!

We are most pleased, however, with the fullness of the promise. The text means, manifestly means, from its connection, a great deal more than it says. We are told not to be covetous. Why? Why should we be covetous? God has said He will never leave us and if we have Him, we possess all things1 Who has need to be covetous when all things are his and God is his? We are told to be contented—not to seek to hoard up so much for the future—because God has provided for the future in the very promise, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." God guarantees to His servants that they shall have enough! Well, let that guarantee prevent both covetousness and discontent! How shall this promise apply to temporal things? "I will never leave you, nor forsake you " does not look, at first sight, as if it had anything to

do with our ordinary expenses. But according to the text it has, for we are told not to be covetous, but to be content with such things as we have. So then, the text applies to the ordinary workingman, to the merchant, to every Christian even in his money matters as well as in his soul matters! "I will not leave you, even in these." He that does not let a sparrow fall to the ground without His permission, will not let His children want! If they should, for a little time, be in need, that shall work their lasting good—they shall dwell in the land and verily they shall be fed! The fullness that lies in the promise is perfectly unbounded. When God says He will be with His servants, He means this, "My wisdom shall be with them to guide them. My love shall be with them to cheer them. My Spirit shall be with them to sanctify them. My power shall be with them to defend them. My everlasting might shall be put forth on their behalf so that they may not fail nor be discouraged." To have God with you were better than to have an army of ten thousand men! And a host of friends were not equal to that one name—the name of Jehovah—for He is a host in Himself! When God is with a man, He is not there asleep, negligent, indifferent—regardless in his time of suffering—but He is there intensely sympathizing, bearing the trouble, helping and sustaining the sufferer and, in due time—His own good time—delivering him in triumph! Oh, precious word of heartening promise! Plunge into it, for it is a sea without a bottom! "I will never leave you, nor forsake you."

Better still, perhaps, in the promise is the certain truth of it. "I will never leave you, nor forsake you " has been proven by God's saints in all the ages that are past. Turn to the pages of your Bibles and see if ever a man was ashamed that put his trust in Christ! See if he that wrestled with the invisible God was ever confounded. Has not the Lord stayed with His people at all hazards—broken the necks of kings and scattered empires like chaff before the wind sooner than that one of His faithful ones should come to ruin?

It has been so even in your own experience. You, too, have found the text to be true. You have gone through fire and through water, but He has never left you nor forsaken you! Your vessel scarcely had enough water to stay off the bottom, but though she had almost grated on the gravel, yet she has kept afloat and though, perhaps, you have been wrecked, yet you have come safely to shore. You have lost much, you say, but you have been a gainer by your loss and where you are today you are by eternal mercy and Covenant Grace—and you could not well be in a better position than God has put you Goodness and mercy have followed you all the days of your life up till now and you are obliged to confess it and to say—

"Streams of mercy never ceasing Call for songs of loudest praise."

So fear not, now that at this particular season God is about to alter His previous dispensation! Out with them, poor Little-Faith! Away with your doubts! Put away those black suspicions! He is a God that changes not and, having helped you until now, He will help you even to the end! Why how true this must be! "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." How

can God forsake that which has cost Him so much already? He has given His Son's blood to redeem us and His Spirit's power to renew us—and if He were to leave undone the work which He has begun—why a tower has been commenced and He has not been able to finish it! A man who has spent much money upon one enterprise will spend yet more to finish it because of what he has already spent. Now God will not lose the work of Christ and the precious blood of His Son—having begun, He will certainly carry on even to the end! Besides this—God cannot leave His people because He calls them His children—and how could He leave His child? "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yes, she may forget, yet will I not forget you." Even when the son has dishonored his father's name and lost his own character, that father's love still holds on and still follows that child with tears of sorrow, but still with faithfulness and truth. And God will not cast away His own begotten sons whom He has begotten again unto a living hope by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead! Beloved, Christ is married to His people and, therefore, how can He leave them? He says, "As a young man rejoices over his bride, so shall your God rejoice over you." And will He leave them to whom He is knit by so near and dear, so tender and affectionate a union? It cannot be! "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." Now, if He did leave His people, what would it be? It would be giving up the whole quarrel between Himself and Satan! It is in His people's hearts that the great battle is being fought out between good and evil. To give them up would be to give up the battle-ground to His great enemy—and what laughter there would be in the vaults of Hell! What mockery in the halls of Pandemonium if it could be said, "God has forsaken His people! Given up His elect! Suffered His redeemed to perish! Cast away His regenerate and forsaken the souls that trusted Him!" The very thought of it is blasphemy! Far, far from us, let us put it away. "I will never leave you, nor forsake you."

I cannot enlarge further upon the promise and need not do so because it opens up itself, or rather God the Holy Spirit will open it up to you if you sit awhile in your chamber and meditate upon it. I do not know of a richer text or one more full of consolation. It is a long skein of the Truth of God—unwind it. It is a precious granary as full as Joseph crammed the granaries of Egypt! Open the door and feed to the fullest—there will be no fear of your ever exhausting it! "For He has said, I will never leave you, nor forsake you."

Now the third thing to be noticed concerning this promise is—

III. THE REMARKABLE EFFECTS THAT SUCH A PROMISE SHOULD PRODUCE.

Surely the first blessed fruit of such a glorious promise should be perfect contentment. It is said to be hard to be content. I have the pleasure of knowing some Brothers and Sisters who I am sure are perfectly content. They even say so and I think without the slightest mental reservation that they have not an unfulfilled wish or desire so far as this world goes. They have all that heart could wish. And yet these are not the richest people in the world and they are not persons who are much to be envied for their mere external circum-

stances—yet they are perfectly content. The fact is that the Grace of God makes the people of God to sing sweetly where other people would murmur! They are satisfied where others would find easy ground for discontent. But how easy it is—how easy it must be for a man to be content when he knows that God has promised to be with him in all circumstances and at all times! Surely if anything could be a kind of conservatory—a hot-house in which to grow the delicate plant of contentment to perfection—it must be this full belief that high or low, rich or poor, well or sick, God has said, "I will never leave, nor forsake you." Surely it was this that made Bunyan's Pilgrim sing in the Valley of Humiliation—

"He that is down need fear no fall.
He that is low no pride—
He that is humble ever shall
Have God to be his guide."

Christian did thereby say that he was content whether he had little or much, and that he left everything in his lot to his God. Oh, get then, my Friends, my text fully into your souls and keep it there as marrow and fatness—and you will be content!

Well, then, in the next place, it will cure your covetousness. A man does not need to go on scraping and to use that muck-rake forever when he knows, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." It was not a bad argument which one usedwith Alexander when he said to him, "When are you going to enjoy yourself fully?" Alexander did not answer the question but the philosopher said, "What are you going to do next?" "First we shall conquer Greece." "Yes, and then will you rest?" "No, we shall then attack Asia Minor." "And when you have conquered that, I suppose you will rest?" "No, we shall then take Persia." "And when you have overcome Persia, what then?" "We shall march to India." "And when you have taken India, what then?" "Why, then we shall sit down and make ourselves merry." "Well " said the philosopher, "I think we had better begin before we go to Greece, or Persia, or Asia Minor, or any of them." And truly so it were as well for us to be content with that moderate income which God gives us. Let us enjoy what God bestows upon us now in gratitude to Him and give ourselves up to His service lest, perhaps, in seeking more, we become spiritually poorer while literally richer—and become less content with the great load on our back than we have today, when we have enough and no more. It is a sweet quietus to covetousness when God says, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you."

And, Beloved, what a promise this is to make a man confident in his God. In his works, in his sufferings, in his enterprises—what a stay of soul is here!

I know what it is to fall back upon this promise, sometimes, to keep from depression of spirit and to find reviving in it. Perhaps you may suppose that those of us who are always before the public and are speaking concerning the blessed promises of God, never have any moments of downcasting and never any times of heart-breaking, but you are quite mistaken! We may have passed through all this, perhaps, that we may know how to say a word in

season to any who are now passing through similar experiences. With many enterprises upon my hands, far too great for my own unaided strength, I am often driven to fall flat upon the promise of my God, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." If I feel that any scheme has been of my own devising and that I seek my own honor in it, I know it must come to the ground and rightly so! But when I can prove that God has thrust it upon me and that I am moved by a Divine impulse and not by my own monitions and wishes, then how can my God forsake me? How can He lie, however weak I may be? How is it possible for Him to send His servant out to battle and not succor him with reinforcements in the day when the battle goes bad? God is not David when he put Uriah in the front and then left him that he might die. He will never put any of His servants forward and then desert them! Dear Brothers and Sisters, if the Lord shall call some of you even to things you cannot do, He will give you strength enough to do them! And if He should push you still forward till your difficulties increase and your burdens become heavy as your days, your strength shall be and you shall go on with the tramp of soldiers with the indomitable spirit of men who have tried and trusted the naked arm of the Eternal God! "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." Then what does it matter? Though all the world were against you, you could shake all the world as Samson shook the lion and tore him as a kid! If God is for you, who can be against you? Though earth and Hell and all their crew come against you and should combine together, yet if the God of Jacob stood at your back, you would thresh them as though they were but wheat and winnow them as though they were but chaff—and the wind would carry them away! Oh, roll this promise under your tongue as a sweet morsel!

How I wish that it belonged to you all! Oh, that everyone of you had a share in it! But some of you, alas, have never fled to Jesus. Oh that you would do so! Whoever trusts Him for pardon by His atoning Sacrifice is saved! To look to the Great Substitute and depend upon Him for salvation—this gives salvation—and then come the promises that belong to the saved!

The Lord in His infinite mercy bless you for Jesus' sake. Amen.